



## PROJECT SUMMARY

Migration Research Group  
University of Waikato  
Hamilton

---

### Māori Migration: The Social Consequences

Linda Waimarie Nikora, Mohi Rua, Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, Bernard Guerin

---

#### Introduction

A team led by Bernard Guerin is looking at the family and community impacts from contemporary forms of migration in a 6-year project *Strangers in Town: Enhancing Family and Community in a More Diverse New Zealand Society*, funded by the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology. One large part of this research looks at Māori migration, headed by Linda Waimarie Nikora.

Since the research on the ‘urban drift’ of the 1950s and 1960s, little has been done to research the effects of Māori migration. Our aim is to draw together the researchers and research results and to conduct our own research to fill in the gaps. We also work with others on the 6-year project who are looking at the population statistics of Māori migration, especially Trans-Tasman migrations.

#### Māori migration

The *Strangers in Town* is looking at Māori migration issues and solutions in conjunction with the *Māori and Psychology Research Unit*. Much is known about why Māori migrate – primarily for employment and education – but little about specific issues, solutions, or new complexities raised by migration. One prediction had been that urbanization and westernization would end traditional Māori ways but, in fact, Iwi have found new ways to strengthen attachment and identity.

We have completed one large study and commencing two others:

- Interviews with Tūhoe who have migrated to Hamilton to describe their motivations, experiences and coping strategies, and the intentions of those who have moved from Tūhoe homelands (and places in between) to the Waikato region in the last 1-5 years, 5-10 years, and 10 years plus. We also describe the community of Tūhoe people living within the Waikato region, the changes and challenges that community has gone through, its interaction with nga tangata whenua o Waikato, and its interaction with te hau kainga
- Interviews and life histories to find out some strategies for maintaining identity or attachment to traditional lands and marae by speaking to those who have moved some time ago, especially members of the urban drift migration of the 1960s and 1970s. What can we learn from them to pass on to other Māori contemplating such a move?



- So far surveyed 40 people of Tūhoe descent currently living in the Waikato district
- Employed 5 Tūhoe ki Waikato community researchers as the primary interviewers

### **We interviewed:**

- Male = 16 Female =24
- Majority live in Hamilton (n=29)
- 75% have lived in their tribal boundaries
- First Language: Maori & English (47%), Maori (27%), English (25%)

### **Why come to the Waikato to live?**

- Education
- Work
- Desire to start a new life
- Self sufficiency, independence and improving circumstances
- Close to home
- Came with parents
- “To chase my future wife” (n=2)

*I've noticed that the majority of the whanau that actually come to the Waikato either work or they're all students, I haven't come across any that just do nothing...*

### **Challenges Faced?**

*I miss the country life, I miss seeing whanau, I miss whanau being around ... it's hard for them to come up here and visit*

*It's probably easier if you've got relations staying in the area just to start off, before you break out on your own*

*Work was difficult...there's hardly anything unless you're heading into an educational career*

### **What helps the migration?**

*Networking is probably the main thing*

*Through practises for the Tūhoe Ahurei. That was like the main networking area...*

*I think it (Tūhoe ki Waikato) tries to get that whanaungatanga  
...Te Hono actually tries to get everyone together*

*A sense of belonging... a place of learning as well*

*We're pretty lucky that we do have our haka group cos then we  
can go back to the ahurei and meet the rest of the whanau*

### **Future Research Studies**

- Conduct studies on Maori family mobility, and effects on classroom turnover and student learning
- Undertake a study of young Maori moving into and out of rural areas and assess their health and social services needs
- Develop intervention strategies to improve access to information and services by both the movers and the resident communities

### **Some Outputs so Far**

Bernard Guerin, Linda Waimarie Nikora & Mohi Rua. (2004). *Maori migration: The social consequences*. Conference paper given at the Institute of Australian Geographers Conference, Adelaide, South Australia, April.

Lani Teddy *Attachment to marae for Maori who have migrated*. Masters Thesis, University of Waikato



## PROJECT SUMMARY

Migration Research Group  
University of Waikato  
Hamilton

---

### Somali Refugee Communities as a Window on New Zealand Society

Bernard Guerin, Pauline B. Guerin, Roda Omar Diiriye

---

#### Introduction

A team led by Bernard Guerin is looking at the family and community impacts from contemporary forms of migration in a 6-year project *Strangers in Town: Enhancing Family and Community in a More Diverse New Zealand Society*, funded by the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology. Looking at Somali settlement in New Zealand following refugee migration makes up a large part of this project..

#### Somalis in Hamilton: Introduction

Our research with Hamilton's Somali community, whose members differ in many ways from most New Zealanders, is a bit like holding up a mirror on our society. How we treat our refugees is a reflection of the sort of people we are, individually and as a nation. Somali differ in so many ways from other New Zealanders that we can discover most of the settlement problems for all migrants within this one group.

#### Some Findings so Far

- The Somali have a very young population in New Zealand with over half the Hamilton population under 16 years of age and 80% under 29 years. This has implications for education and employment in the future, and also highlights that there are few middle-aged and older persons present to guide the younger ones.
- The bureaucracies of western societies can be a major obstacle for Somalis who grew up with very different forms of governance. Just having an average of six children can create a number of complications with bureaucracies, even something as simple as filling in forms.
- Also, we see prejudice and discrimination towards Somali and other refugees increase over time in institutions such as government departments and schools. We are working to understand and address these issues without blaming either the Somali or the bureaucrats.
- Most Somali say the trauma of war is not a major factor influencing their personal well-being right now. But they can find it difficult to enjoy life knowing that many of their children and close relatives are still in appalling refugee camps or are missing. Specialized mental health and advocacy services for migrants and refugees in Hamilton are desperately needed and our project is working with others towards achieving this.

- Somali women are concerned about putting on weight because they use cars instead of walking the long distances they used to in everyday life. We have held exercise and traditional dance classes for the women for three years now to help overcome this problem. Exercise classes developed for Somali women were successful despite several major obstacles, and have been running for 4 years. There has been a lot of interest in this project from groups overseas wanting to set up similar projects.
- Somali youth are beginning to question some traditional customs such as arranged marriages. So we interviewed Indian women who had already been through this issue when they or their children married. They provided us with strategies that we are passing on to Somali about how compromises can be found without major intergenerational conflicts.
- In our interviews with 54 Somali women, only one was opposed to any form of female cutting and most resented the heavy handed way this issue had been treated in New Zealand and thought that their culture had been treated rudely. Most were in favour of a lesser form of cutting but were positive about their own experiences.
- The Somali interviewed about health and health care were generally positive about their experiences in NZ but relied heavily on their GPs. There was confusion regarding medications and the ease of prescriptions by GPs.
- The majority of Somali were unemployed or did seasonal work and English still remains the major obstacle. Innovative initiatives are required since many worked as business people in the Middle East and Africa and could potentially do so here, except in handling the bureaucracies and language. Women's employment also needs some innovative thinking and we are monitoring a mentoring system that might provide some direction.
- Interviews so far with service providers show a number of key areas in which negative impressions are formed about Somali (and some other refugee groups) because of behaviours exhibited when interacting with bureaucracies. These issues can be corrected, however, and intervention projects will be commenced following completion of these interviews.

## **Specific Research Studies so Far**

### ***Established***

1. Census of Somali in Hamilton.
2. Interviews on Female Cutting (circumcision) with 54 Somali women nationally.
3. Employment interviews with 50 men and 50 women from Somali community.
4. Interviews with Somali women who had been through the mental health system.
5. Interviews with Indian women about their arranged marriages and changes that had been made.
6. Interviews with School Principals, teachers, Somali students and Somali parents about the parent-school interaction and positive ways to improve it.
7. Exercise and health of the Somali women in community.
8. Setting up of an email network for refugee researchers in NZ.
9. Interviews with service providers to Somali clients about their changing impressions and biases towards and against such clients.

10. Observations and interviews with students and teachers about impressions of Muslim school children.
11. Studies on mental health views of Somali and appropriate treatments.

### ***Commencing soon***

1. Case studies and life histories of Somali.
2. Initiatives for Somali youth support (establishment of a community group that will include some research and interventions).
3. Initiatives for mental health services for refugees in Hamilton (establishment of community service that will include research and interventions).
4. Initiatives for employment for refugees in Hamilton (establishment of a community group that will include research and interventions).
5. Case-studies of Somali households including mobility, economics, management, and community integration.

### **Some Outputs so Far ([bguerin@waikato.ac.nz](mailto:bguerin@waikato.ac.nz))**

#### ***Chapters in Books***

- Guerin, P. B., & Guerin, B. (2002). Relocating refugees in developed countries: The poverty experiences of Somali resettling in New Zealand. In K. Lyon & C. Voight-Graf (Eds.), *5<sup>th</sup> International APMRN Conference, Fiji 2002: Selected papers* (pp. 64-70). University of Wollongong: Wollongong.
- Guerin, B., Guerin, P., Abdi, A., & Diiriye, R. O. (2003). Identity and community: Somali children's adjustments to life in the western world. In J. Gao, R. Le Heron & J. Logie (Eds.), *Windows on a changing world* (pp. 184-188). Auckland: NZ Geographical Society.

#### ***Refereed Papers***

- Guerin, B. (2003). Combating prejudice and racism: New interventions from a functional analysis of racist language. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 13, 29-45.
- Guerin, P. B., Diiriye, R. O., Corrigan, C., & Guerin, B. (2003). Physical activity programs for refugee Somali women: Working out in a new country. *Women & Health*, 38, 83-99.
- Guerin, B., Abdi, A. & Guerin, P. B. (2003). Health status of Somali refugees living in Hamilton and their experiences with the medical system. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, 32, 27-32.
- Guerin, B., Guerin, P. B., Diiriye, R. O., & Abdi, A. (2003). Living in a close community: The everyday life of Somali refugees. *Network*.

#### ***Material currently under review***

- Guerin, B. (2003). *The subtle legacies of colonialism and oppression: The social and historical contexts of contemporary non-dominant groups*.
- Yates, S., Diiriye, R. O., Guerin, P. B., & Guerin, B. (2003). *Refugee Somali women and mental health: Their beliefs and experiences of the mental health system*.
- Guerin, B., Guerin, P. B., Diiriye, R. O., & Yates, S. (2003). *Somali conceptions and expectations of mental health: Some guidelines for mental health professionals*.
- Wood, E. J., & Guerin, B. (2003). *Strategies for combining traditional and western marriage patterns: The experiences of some Indian female immigrants*.
- Guerin, P. B., Diiriye, R. O., & Corrigan, C. (2003). *Body composition and cardiorespiratory fitness among refugee Somali women living in New Zealand*.

#### ***Conference Papers***

*Health status of Somali refugees living in Hamilton and their experiences with the medical system.* (B. Guerin & A. Abdi). Paper given at the New Zealand Psychological Society conference, Auckland, August, 2001.

*Living in a Close Community: The Everyday Life of Somali Refugee Women and Children.* Australian Social Psychology Conference, Adelaide, April, 2002 (B. Guerin, P. Guerin, Abdirizak Abdi, & Roda Omar Diiriye)

*Relocating refugees in developed countries: How the experience of poverty influences resettlement of Somali in New Zealand.* Paper in workshop at the 5<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Migration Research Network Conference, Fiji, September 2002 (B. Guerin & P. B. Guerin)

*Somali settlement experiences.* At the “New Directions: New Settlers: New Challengers: Building and enhancing communities” end-users meeting, Wellington, April 2003 (B. Guerin & P. B. Guerin).

*Mental health care of Somali in New Zealand.* Invited talk to the Waikato Branch of the New Zealand Psychological Society, Hamilton, June 2003 (B. Guerin & P. B. Guerin)

*Overview of research with Somali Community in Hamilton.* Talk to the Waikato New Settlers Focus Group, Hamilton, June 2003 (B. Guerin).

*The life experiences of Somali refugee children in Hamilton, New Zealand.* Paper given at the Australasian Human Development Association Conference, Waiheke Island, July 2003 (Bernard Guerin & Abdirizak Abdi).

*Conflict in the Gym: The Development of Identity among Somali Adolescent and Teenage Girls during Exercise Classes.* Paper given at the Australasian Human Development Association Conference, Waiheke Island, July 2003 (Pauline Guerin & Roda Diiriye).

*Identity and community: Somali children’s adjustment to life in the western world.* Paper given at the New Zealand Geography Society conference, Auckland, July 2003 (B. Guerin & Pauline Guerin, Abdirizak Abdi & Roda Omar Diiriye).

*Overview of the Hamilton Somali community with special reference to discrimination.* Invited presentation to final year Social Work students at Waikato Institute of Technology, September 2003 (B. Guerin & P. B. Guerin).

*Families, communities and migration: What exactly changes?* (B. Guerin & P.B. Guerin). Conference paper given at the Institute of Australian Geographers Conference, Adelaide, South Australia, April, 2004.

*Refugees and Health.* Invited presentation to 2nd year Nursing students, Waikato Institute of Technology, March 5, 2004 (P. Guerin).

### ***Theses***

#### ***PhD Theses underway***

Emma Wood	Interventions for school children against racism and prejudice towards Muslims
Juanita Ryan	Perspectives on mental health for Somali women and appropriate interventions

#### ***Masters Theses Completed***

Emma Woods	Dating for Indian Adolescent females and the strategies used by their families to deal with westernization
Susan Yates	Client and professional views of mental health services for Somali women in Hamilton
Abdirizak Abdi	Enhancing educational access for the Somali community through school management and parental involvement